

SENATE RESOLUTION 79

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Knoxville Police Chief
Eve Thomas on the occasion of her retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that we should honor those citizens who have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm throughout their careers in law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, Chief Eve Thomas of the Knoxville Police Department (KPD) is one such estimable individual, who has devoted her life to the preservation of law and order and the protection of her fellow citizens and is taking a much-deserved retirement on May 1, 2022, after nearly thirty years of service; and

WHEREAS, Eve Thomas began her career with the Knoxville Police Department in January 1993; prior to being promoted to sergeant in November 1998, she served as a patrol officer, field training officer, breath alcohol test operator, recruitment coordinator, traffic accident reconstructionist, problem solving investigator, police driving instructor, assistant public information officer, and an adjunct domestic violence/terrorism instructor at Walters State Community College; and

WHEREAS, at the rank of sergeant, she served in various capacities, including patrol sergeant, personnel sergeant, and accreditation manager; during this time, she attended a "Train the Trainer" course on community-oriented policing through the Southeastern Community Oriented Policing Education Institute and also served as an instructor for the institute in conflict resolution and mediation; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, she was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and assigned as the Special Operations supervisor, in which capacity she was administratively responsible for the department's specialty units, including the Crisis Negotiation Unit, Special Operations Squad,

K9 Unit, Inspections Detail, Search and Recovery Team, Mobile Field Force, Teleserve Unit, Animal Control Officers, and other specialty units that worked within the Patrol Division; and

WHEREAS, later in her tenure as a lieutenant, Eve Thomas served as Traffic Services supervisor, patrol lieutenant, and Central Business District supervisor; in 2011, she attained the rank of captain and served as a supervisor within the department's Support Services Division, responsible for the Training Section, Safety Education Unit, SROs, and Property Detail; then, on January 1, 2013, she was assigned to the Patrol Division as the East District commander; and

WHEREAS, on April 1, 2015, she assumed an assignment as the department's Internal Affairs Unit commander, and on February 9, 2017, she was assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division, overseeing the Violent Crimes, Property Crimes, and Special Crimes units; she was promoted to deputy chief and assumed the role as commander of the Criminal Investigations Division on February 4, 2018; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Madeline Rogero named Eve Thomas chief of police in 2018, and since that time, Chief Thomas has led the Knoxville Police Department in hiring a recruitment marketing firm and restructuring recruitment efforts, deploying body-worn cameras, and launching the co-responder program, which pairs an officer with a social worker for cases involving mental health crises—a first among Tennessee law enforcement agencies; she also expanded the resources available for KPD officers and professional staff with the implementation of an employee wellness program that took a comprehensive and leading approach that is helping destigmatize mental illness; and

WHEREAS, she also led the department through transition as Knoxville committed to a new \$70 million Public Safety Complex, which is set to open next summer; and

WHEREAS, Chief Thomas has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and a master's degree from Long Island University's Homeland Security Master's Institute; and

WHEREAS, she holds certification as a Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies assessor and attended the inaugural class of the Southeastern Command and Leadership Academy, in addition to the Tennessee Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar and the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy; she also received training at the Senior Management Institute for Police in Boston and the Executive Leadership Survival course through the Law Enforcement Executive Development Association and attended the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Women's Leadership; and

WHEREAS, Chief Eve Thomas has developed lesson plans for courses in community- and problem-oriented policing, accreditation, officer safety for women, and traffic accident investigations and has served as a police driving instructor as needed; and

WHEREAS, Chief Thomas has served her community as a Salvation Army board member and as chair of the Knox County Community Health Council; she is a graduate of Leadership Knoxville and a member of the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police, IACP, the Police Executive Research Forum, and the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives; she also works with the Tennessee Women in Criminal Justice Steering Committee; and

WHEREAS, her many professional accomplishments aside, Chief Eve Thomas is grateful for the love and support of her husband of more than thirty years, Karl, and their two sons; and

WHEREAS, Chief Thomas exemplifies the values of hard work, compassion, and devotion to community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean and diligent officer of the law; she has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the sincere respect and admiration of her colleagues, her fellow officers, and a grateful public; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor and commend Chief Eve Thomas upon the occasion of her retirement, extending our gratitude for her more than three decades of dedicated service to the Knoxville Police Department and the residents of Knox County and our best wishes for success in all her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.